

Government completes review of investigation findings submitted by Airport Authority Hong Kong on incident regarding Automated People Mover system at Hong Kong International Airport

With regard to an incident on November 21 last year in which a young passenger was suspected to have stepped into a gap between a platform and the train of the Automated People Mover (APM) system at Hong Kong International Airport, the Government is highly concerned about the incident and has completed the review of the investigation report and relevant supplementary information submitted by the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) as requested by the Government.

On system safety, the AAHK's investigation did not find any systematic safety issues with the APM system. Infrared devices are installed at the platform screen doors (PSDs) and train doors such that when it detects that a passenger or obstacle has been trapped between the PSD and the train door, the system will instruct the PSDs and the train doors to remain open. Meanwhile, when the PSDs or train doors cannot close properly due to an obstruction, the system will instruct the train not to depart and an alert will be issued to the controllers in the Integrated Airport Centre simultaneously. Furthermore, the AAHK commenced a project to narrow the gap between the platform and the train in mid-2023 and completed it in June this year, which will serve to prevent passengers from stepping into the platform gap. The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) has confirmed that the APM system is safe in its design and operation.

On notification of incidents, according to the Airport Authority (Automated People Mover) (Safety) Regulation (Cap. 483C), the AAHK shall give notice to the Government of every accident and occurrence on the APM of a type described in the Schedule to Cap. 483C, which includes an incident in which a person falls between a train and a platform.

The AAHK conducted a thorough and in-depth investigation into the incident and found no evidence of a cover-up of the incident by any staff. It admitted that the scope of the first investigation, conducted by the AAHK's relevant department early this year, was not thorough enough to identify the incident early. According to the investigation of the AAHK, after the young passenger stepped into the gap between the platform and the train, other passengers immediately pulled her out of the gap. Since train doors were closed as scheduled, the system alert was not triggered. The AAHK did not receive any complaint or injury report filed by the passenger concerned or her family at that time. That said, the AAHK admitted that there was lack of

clarity in the APM Operation and Emergency Procedure Manual, and a lack of alertness in reporting and communication among the frontline staff concerned, resulting in the incident not being properly recorded at that time. Therefore, the relevant staff of the AAHK failed to identify the incident in time and report it to the Government.

The Government notes that the AAHK has already taken disciplinary actions against the relevant staff, and has seriously requested the AAHK to implement the following improvement measures to prevent a recurrence of similar incidents:

(i) Strengthening of the incident notification mechanism: updating the APM Operation and Emergency Procedure Manual and arranging relevant training for frontline staff to enhance staff awareness in handling and recording incidents, which will enable the relevant departments of the AAHK to notify the Government according to the records;

(ii) Enhancement of the incident investigation mechanism: arranging a dedicated department to co-ordinate investigations and follow-up actions in relation to incidents or potential incidents related to APM passenger safety in order to ensure all future incidents or potential incidents would be investigated in a thorough and comprehensive manner; and

(iii) Enhancement of the CCTV system at the platform: adjusting and enhancing the CCTV set-up at the platform to cover more viewing angles, with a view to facilitating the detection and investigation of APM incidents by staff.

â€‹The Government notes that the AAHK enhanced the incident investigation mechanism immediately and has been actively implementing the other two improvement measures, which include finishing the updating of the APM Operation and Emergency Procedure Manual and arranging relevant training next month to strengthen the incident notification mechanism, and completing the enhancement of the CCTV system at the platform by March next year. The Government will closely monitor the AAHK's progress of implementation. The EMSD has also confirmed that the APM system is safe in its design and operation, and that the aforementioned narrowing of the platform gap and enhancement of the CCTV system will help prevent the recurrence of similar incidents.